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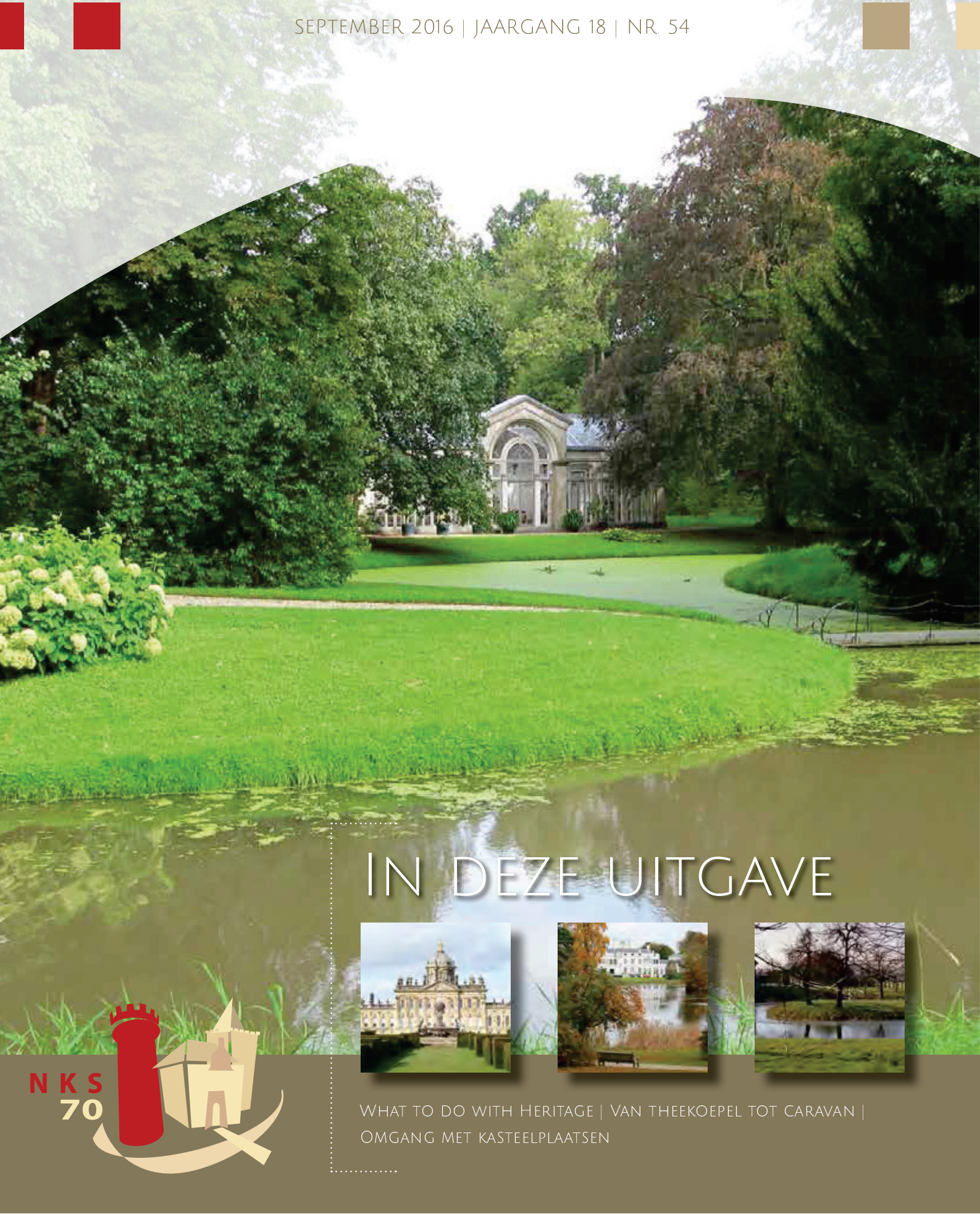
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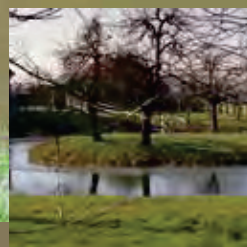
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# KASTEEL & BUITENPLAATS

SEPTEMBER 2016 | JAARGANG 18 | NR. 54



## IN DEZE UITGAVE



NKS  
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WHAT TO DO WITH HERITAGE | VAN THEEKOEPSEL TOT CARAVAN |  
OMGANG MET KASTEELPLAATSEN



# *“Uitzonderlijk in Bijzonder Vastgoed”*



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## VAN DE REDACTIE

Een primeur in dit nummer: een Engelstalig artikel van de hand van een van de jonge onderzoekers, die bij de NKS een tijdlang heeft meegelopen. Steeds meer wordt Engels de wetenschappelijke voertaal, zoals het Latijn dat tijdens de middeleeuwen was. Hoewel het lang niet altijd logisch is om in het Engels te publiceren, heeft het als voordeel dat ook buitenlandse collega-onderzoekers op die manier gemakkelijker kennis kunnen nemen van de ontwikkelingen in Nederland op het terrein van kastelen en buitenplaatsen. We hebben er in dit geval ook voor gekozen omdat het onderwerp internationaal georiënteerd is: een vergelijking van de rol die kastelen spelen in het nationale erfgoeddebat in Groot-Brittannië, Duitsland en Nederland.

De symbolische waarde die kastelen hebben, sluit ook direct aan bij het thema van *Open Monumentendag* van dit jaar, waarin opnieuw vele kastelen en buitenplaatsen hun deuren openen voor belangstellenden. Het belang van dit erfgoed is veel mensen duidelijk, maar dat betekent niet per definitie dat het voortbestaan ervan is gewaarborgd. Het onderzoek van Eline van Rossem laat zien dat het met de bescherming van kasteelplaatsen bijvoorbeeld niet altijd vlekkeloos verloopt. Kasteelonderzoek kan op verschillende manieren worden aangepakt: hoe zich dat in Delft in de afgelopen decennia heeft ontwikkeld kunt u verderop in dit nummer lezen.

Nog een laatste belangrijke mededeling: noteer *10 december* alvast in uw agenda. Op die dag sluiten we het jubileumjaar af met een bijeenkomst rondom twee thema's: *Nieuw onderzoek naar kastelen en buitenplaatsen* en *Erfgoed en oorlog*. Locatie en exact programma worden binnenkort bekend gemaakt. Houdt daartoe onze website in het oog: [www.kastelen.nl](http://www.kastelen.nl)

## IN MEMORIAM

### *Frans Jozef Pieter Marie baron van Hövell tot Westervlier en Wezeveld*

\* Vught 23 maart 1950

Breda 7 januari 2016 †

Onlangs overleed Frans van Hövell tot Westervlier, een betrokken donateur en vrijwilliger van NKS Kenniscentrum voor Kasteel en Buitenplaats. Hij was jurist en werkzaam als advocaat en procureur in Nijmegen. Daarnaast was hij zeer geïnteresseerd in cultureel erfgoed. Dat uitte zich in een actieve betrokkenheid bij kastelen en buitenplaatsen. Als lid van een oud adellijk geslacht had ook de Nederlandse adel zijn grote belangstelling. De beminlijke Frans van Hövell wilde graag anderen laten delen in zijn grote kennis en als vrijwilliger bij de NKS heeft hij lange jaren de directie ondersteund.

Met zijn juridische achtergrond was hij een grote steun om de juiste formuleringen en de juiste wetgeving te gebruiken bij het schrijven van zienswijzen, bezwaarschriften en beroepschriften. Met plezier wordt door (oud)medewerkers teruggedacht aan de lange sessies per kasteel, waarin werd afgewogen wat de juiste en meest slimme insteek zou kunnen zijn om aantasting van een bedreigd kasteel of buitenplaats te voorkomen.

Zo was hij actief betrokken bij de procedures rond Stoutenburg, Bouvigne en De Hartekamp, spelend rond 2007 en 2008. Zijn bemoeienis met Stoutenburg heeft geleid tot behoud van de kasteelplaats. In die tijd heeft hij zijn belangstelling verbreed naar beeldende kunst en is hij zich gaan verdiepen in museologie. Hij volgde daartoe universitair onderwijs.

Na zijn dood bleek hij de NKS in zijn testament te hebben bedacht, waarvoor bestuur en directie hem zeer dankbaar zijn.

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## THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE OF CASTLE AND COUNTRY HOUSE TOURISM

# WHAT TO DO WITH HERITAGE

> **door Frieda Kreuer**

*Frieda Kreuer is currently part of the Master's programme of Heritage and Memory Studies at the University of Amsterdam. As part of her studies she completed five months of research work for the NKS Kenniscentrum voor Kasteel en Buitenplaats.*

**The recent years have seen an increasingly difficult environment for the preservation work of castles and country houses in the Netherlands. With diminishing governmental financial support, the sector has to rethink its strategies and try to create more awareness for its cause. A study of the perception of country houses and castles in the United Kingdom and Germany through the ages may help to reveal factors which influence the way a society values historical objects. Applying these findings on the Dutch situation could provide us with new ideas for the management of castles and country houses. Is increased tourism really the only option for ensuring financial security?**

### 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

In the theoretical concept of heritage, remains of bygone times are seen as crucial carriers of memories of and information about our ancestors and historical events. Within this framework, castles and country houses are not only valuable testaments of time because of their architecture, but also because their walls and the historical artefacts hidden behind them can tell us stories about their former inhabitants and keep their memory alive in the collective memory of a society. This process of storytelling often relies heavily on the continuing existence of the historical material they are based on. But this work of heritage management is a costly undertaking. Those who set themselves to preserve tapestries, candelabras and fortification structures either have to depend on governmental support or generous donations from

> ONLY A CASTLE BY NAME, THE COUNTRY HOUSE OF CASTLE HOWARD IS A POPULAR TOURIST ATTRACTION AND FILM LOCATION TODAY.  
PHOTO BY PWOJDACZ WIKICOMMONS

the interested public. In the Netherlands, the sector of castle and country house preservation has increasingly struggled with acquiring sufficient financial means and, similar to developments in other Western European countries, turns more and more often to the spending power of tourist wallets. But at the same time, many have raised concerns of the consequences of 'selling' heritage for the sake of increasing income. Does the commercialisation of historical artefacts not necessarily lead to their destruction – physically and metaphorically? A look across geographical and temporal borders could provide a better understanding of the





> ENGLISH LANDSCAPE GARDENS LIKE BLENHEIM PARK REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE ATTRACTION THAT COUNTRY HOUSES HAVE HAD ON TRAVELLERS AND ARTISTS THROUGH TIME. PHOTO BY FRED VOGELZANG

relationship between tourism and heritage protection. Especially the United Kingdom and Germany, which are most commonly connected with a rich heritage of country houses and castles respectively, reveal patterns of interconnection between several themes that influence the character of heritage protection. These themes include overarching concepts like national identity, arts, and valorisation. Admittedly, the relevance of these concepts for the details and everyday challenges of castle and country house protection in the Netherlands may not be obvious at first glance. However, the comparative study of countries and epochs reveals that practical concerns of the heritage sector and today's challenges of finding the right balance between preservation and commercialisation cannot be separated from underlying patterns of how a society interprets and values historical objects.

## 2. FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

With more than half of the top ten destinations occupied by locations like Stourhead, the ranking list of the most visited attractions reads more like an inventory list of the grandest country houses in the United Kingdom.<sup>1</sup> Tourist numbers clearly highlight that country houses represent one of the essential, if not the quintessential, constituent of British identity in the eyes of visitors. But this is by far not a phenomenon of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in fact, the past centuries have seen an often troubled but constant institutionalisation of these noble structures as valuable national symbols. Having originated as centres of community for the local population in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the focus soon shifted towards expressions of wealth and status for nobility and the emerging class of merchants, away from the needs of tenants and local responsibility.<sup>2</sup> The luxuriously equipped 'prodigy houses' attracted a growing number of elite visitors from within the kingdom but also from abroad.<sup>3</sup> Around them a system of guide books and interpreter services developed which could be defined as early

signs of a tourism industry. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, an interdependency between touristic interest in country houses as symbols of British taste and the owner's need to show off their riches had been solidified. With the arrival of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, country house owners saw themselves forced to open up their homes to a wider range of people, now also including members of the non-elite classes because of growing financial struggles with the upkeep of their luxurious lodgings. In times of social changes at accelerating speed, contemporary visitors poured into the country houses and their gardens in the hope of finding traces of a bygone era of stability and a British way of country life untouched by industrialisation.<sup>4</sup> But the upheavals of the Second World War and the increasing self-confidence of the working class led to a more negative perception of the country houses.

They were no longer seen as national symbols that had to be protected by associations but as symbols of elitism and social injustice. Only thanks to the combined efforts of institutional powers like the government and alarmist exhibitions of the extinction of the country house as depositories of national genius, public awareness for their value began to improve again.<sup>5</sup> However, it is questionable if these efforts would have had the same effect if not for the support of marketing strategies. Enlisting experts to remodel the presentation of country houses according to the needs of modern tourism, many estates were established as a part of a country park which allowed the conduct of leisure activities like camping besides the traditional visit to the noble structure. In this way, they acquired a function that was more

1 'Year in Record' National Trust. n.d., p. 71.

2 Adrian Tinniswood, *The Polite Tourist. A History of Country House Visiting*. (London 1998), pp. 16-20.

3 Ibid., 27-29.

4 Peter Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home*. (New Haven and London 1997), pp. 31-32, 90.

5 Giles Worsley, 'Beyond the Powerhouse. Understanding the Country House in the Twenty-First Century'. *Historical Research* 78.201 (August 2005), pp. 423-424.



similar to their original role as centres of community and were, thus, included again into national heritage perception by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

So while the British case suggests that there is a correlation between what the general public and the international community define as typical assets of a country's heritage as well as the level of access that the public has to this heritage and the awareness for the need of preservation, the case of castles in Germany also shows the importance of artistic appreciation. Already from the Middle Ages on, castles represented an essential trope in the arts. Having originated in France, the tradition of travelling singers reciting *Minnelieder* to noblemen spread across European courts under the influence of Willem de Troubadour. These songs told stories of valiant knights who defended the honour of their master or love interest. Castles functioned both as locations for the recital as well as metaphor for the things that had to be defended or conquered.<sup>6</sup> Over the following centuries, castles were securely established and valued in the world of arts and folklore. Their relevance also found expression in the form of tourism. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, travellers following the route of the Grand Tour visited the medieval castles along the Rhine and Mosel for their dramatic setting in the landscape and picturesque state of ruin.<sup>7</sup> And again, arts further heightened the valorisation of these castles. Many of the structures were directly linked to tales of folklore which often featured eerie apparitions or sad love stories. In this way they fit perfectly to the Romantic sensitivities of the tourists. Perhaps the most famous example for this phenomenon is the *Nibelungensaga* which is set in the area around the ruin of Drachenfels.<sup>8</sup> This brings us back to national identities as crucial influencing factor of the valorisation of historical objects. As we have seen in the British case, country houses were not always considered a part of national heritage, affected by common people's perception of nobility, level of access and more general developments in society. The *Nibelungensaga* and other tales add another explanation to the construction of identities. On both a local and national level, art in the form of folklore served as a

source of pride and identification with the castles and the values that were attached to them through the tales.<sup>9</sup> Especially during the 19<sup>th</sup> century when an evolving sense of a German community centred around a shared set of cultural achievements, called the *Kulturnation*, celebrated the society of the Holy Roman Empire because it supposedly represented the epitome of German values. Consequently, medieval structures like the Wartburg were chosen as locations for political rallies which called for the German unification.<sup>10</sup> The interaction between national identity, arts and castles can also be seen in the works of Richard Wagner. Considered to be one of the most influential German composers today, Wagner used the *Nibelungensaga* as inspiration for his epos *Der Ring der Nibelungen*.<sup>11</sup> And so centuries of canonisation have 'Germanified' and transformed castles into a national myth that inspires a sense of community and pride on a national and local level.

The examples of the United Kingdom and Germany usefully illustrate the positive impact of artistic interest and inclusion in a national narrative on historical objects. Unfortunately, the same factors seem to have played a significantly less favourable role in the case of Dutch castles and country houses. Especially the comparison of the presence of castles or country houses in regional and national identity reveal a stark contrast in valorisation. The general Dutch Canon, a governmental effort of defining fifty thematic 'windows' of significant Dutch cultural achievements for school education<sup>12</sup> largely features topics of trade or agriculture and also includes the era of country houses during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, but only in context of the Golden Age and their distinctively Dutch gardening style.<sup>13</sup> Castles are thoroughly ignored. However, the so-called 'Regiocanons' include castles and country houses in great numbers. Put together on the basis of public suggestions, these canons list castles and country houses as one of the essential aspects of Dutch landscape and heritage. For example, the

6 G. Ulrich Großmann, *Die Welt der Burgen. Geschichte, Architektur, Kultur*. (München 2013), pp. 237-238.

7 Ibid., 225-227.

8 Hélène Adeline Guerber, *The Legends of the Rhine*. (New York 1895), pp. 140-141.

9 Robert R. Taylor, *The Castles of the Rhine. Recreating the Middle Ages in Modern Germany*. (Waterloo 1998), p. 25.

10 Ulrike Anne Müller, 'Far Away So Close. Race, Whiteness, and German Identity,' *Identities* 18.6 (2011), pp. 39-40, 62-63.

11 Taylor, *Castles of the Rhine*, pp. 58-59.

12 Frans H. Doppen, 'Citizenship Education and the Dutch National Identity Debate,' *Social Justice* 5.2 (2010), p. 137.

13 Committee for the Development of the Dutch Canon. *A Key to Dutch History*. (Amsterdam 2007), pp. 130-131, 146-147, 164-165.

> VIEW ON THE DRACHENFELS IN  
'SIEBENGEbirge' NEAR BONN.  
PHOTO BY LEIT. COMMONS.  
WIKIMEDIA.ORG





canon of Vollenhove lists a episcopal fortress and denotes a whole 'window' to the theme of knighthood and another one to the renaissance castle of Toutenburg.<sup>14</sup> Could the factors that apparently have had an influence on the perception of British country houses and German castles provide us with an explanation for the marginalised status of castles and country houses in Dutch identity on a national level? As it was already mentioned in this article, the dramatic settings of German castles favourably supported their impact on visitors in the Romantic era. Often set on top of steep mountains covered in thick forests and overlooking majestic rivers like the Rhine, these structures inspired strong emotional responses and a feeling of connection with the place. In comparison to this, Dutch castles with their simple architecture and flat surroundings must have left a much less strong impression on visitors during that time. But this argument of aesthetics seems to fall short when it comes to country houses. The buildings constructed by wealthy *burgers* during the Golden Age present the visitor with a similar level of luxury and splendour as their British counterparts. And this similarity deserves a closer look because it seems to challenge the traditional interpretation of the Golden Age. In the Dutch national narrative, the 16<sup>th</sup> century was a time ruled by ingenious entrepreneurship and modesty. Following the original understanding of the term *burger* as a working person living accordingly to the guidelines

of Christianity, this also included strict notions about luxury and excessive display of wealth. However, recent studies suggest that the *burgers* did not always live up to this high moral standard and had indeed a great passion for accumulating riches.<sup>16</sup> Their exquisitely furnished country houses support this notion but they also represent a challenge to the national image of the Netherlands as a country with a long standing tradition of equality and egalitarianism. This nationalised story about the tolerant and independent Dutch can also be detected in folklore. For example, the so-called 'Batavian myth' sees the Dutch as descendants of the Batavian people who valiantly fought against Roman oppression.<sup>17</sup> This tale became popular among humanists because it usefully supported the notion of a Dutch right to self-rule.<sup>18</sup> Together with other stories like 'The Lady of Stavoren' which paint an unfavourable picture of elite entitlement and greed,<sup>19</sup> it seems to suggest itself that similar to the German case folklore has played an influential role in the perception of country houses and castles – just in a way more negative way.

14 'Canon van het Land van Vollenhove.' regioncanons.nl. n.d.

15 Karin Tilmans, 'Republikeins burgerschap en het civic humanism in de Bourgondisch-Habsburgse Nederlanden, 1477-1566.' eds. Kloek, Joost and Karin Tilmans. (eds) *Burger*. (Amsterdam 2002), p. 83.

16 Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches. An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*. Hammersmith, (London 1987), pp. 83, 298, 306-310.

17 Anke van der Woud, *De Bataafse Hut*. (Amsterdam 1990), pp. 10-12.

18 Tilmans, 'Civic humanism', pp. 81-82.

19 Guerber, *Legends of the Rhine*, pp. 1-4.

> THE PUBLIC VOTED FOR THE  
TOUTENBERG AS SYMBOL OF  
REGIONAL IDENTITY,  
PAINTING BY  
J. CAMERLINCK  
1660





### 3. DISCUSSION

The study of the development of country houses and castles in the United Kingdom and Germany highlights the importance of public valorisation and perception for the preservation work of historical objects. May it be a value in terms of aesthetics, artistic appreciation, touristic interest or inclusion into a national narrative, the need for preservation and protection is most strongly felt if at least one of these factors is given. So what can heritage practitioners in the Netherlands take away from this? Unfortunately, the just mentioned factors not only interact in a positive but also in a negative way with historical objects. For example, a country house which is deemed valuable by tourists or a local community for its aesthetics could be irreversibly damaged by the trampling feet of visitors or the construction of added facilities like restaurants.

A castle which manages to attract an outstanding number of tourists and income through immersive story telling or its connection to folklore could receive governmental funding but, at the same time, the masses of visitors could also lead to the local community's estrangement with the castle. These considerations about the physical and metaphorical sustainability of heritage management make it difficult to derive direct practical advices from this study. If not for the ever growing lack of financial means for preserving country houses and castles in the Netherlands, the safest strategy to protect them from destruction would probably be shutting out the public or not using the buildings at all. This way the material could be restored to fit to a certain defined 'original' state and then preserved in this state without the threat of human interference. However, it is questionable if this is truly feasible.

This solution heavily relies on intensive funding from the state and associations or sufficient revenue generated through agriculture and other sources of income that do not involve public access.

And admittedly, tourism only rarely frees castle and country house managers or owners from their financial problems. However, there are still strong arguments speaking for the opening up of castles and country houses for the public. For instance, such imposing structures were always constructed in order to fulfil a certain function as fortification, status symbol or community centre. And their value largely lay in these functions, which most often included some level of public participation – physically or metaphorically. This aspect becomes even more important in these days when practitioners can less and less rely on governmental support and more on the people's awareness for the endangered state of heritage which will then hopefully turn into financial aid. But the nature of humankind works in a way that people are often quite unwilling to spend money on things that do not carry a direct value or use for them. And so workers in the field of heritage preservation need to ask themselves how they can make the historical objects

that are under their care valuable and usable for the public. The easiest solution for this challenge would be to open the gates and grant access, which does not necessarily have to mean mass tourism. A good management can find a middle way between total seclusion and a total sell-out. Visitor numbers can be limited through defined opening hours only during selected seasons or only for events. And if the opening of the actual building is absolutely not possible because of the sensitive state of the material then at least the grounds around the castle or country house can be made accessible. In this way, tourism or, in order to use a less negatively tinged word, leisure activities can indeed become manageable. The hope that lies underneath this process of opening up is that by being able to use and to experience historical objects, visitors will learn to value them and understand the necessity of protecting them. But physical access is not always sufficient to create this sense of awareness. Ideally, visitors to a country house or a castle will also identify with its history and the values it represents. This is only rarely achieved by merely wandering around but is most often the effect of an emotional response to the place and its story. And this is where heritage management has to take action. The study of Romantic tourism shows us how important legends and folk tales were for the visitor's emotional engagement with a place. Those in charge of presenting and managing historical objects today can learn from this by trying to tell the stories of a castle or country house in a compelling way. For example, already existing local tales about a castle could be used to attract interest which then again can be used to educate visitors about the history of the structure and its importance. This can involve new techniques of display which do not have to involve invasive reconstructions of the building. A simple tool like headphones playing music that fits to the respective story that is being told or room that is being visited can help to create an effective response to the space. Another strategy could be to challenge traditional images about themes like nobility, religion or arts that have been institutionalised in the Dutch national narrative. Modern heritage presentation should leave room for renegotiation of well-established notions and be thought-provoking instead of just dryly repeating facts over and over again. In this way, a deep and long lasting understanding of the importance of a visited place can be achieved on a personal and eventually on a societal level.

Tourism is neither a magical cure for financial problems nor one of the Apocalyptic riders. A look at the history of the function and interpretation of country houses in the United Kingdom and of castles in Germany reveals the patterns in which valorisation of historical objects works. Tourism is clearly one of the most influential factors in this process along with arts, general developments in society and national identities. These factors can have both a positive as well as a negative effect on the way castles and country houses are valued by individuals or a community. Today's Dutch heritage management cannot ignore this aspect of valorisation in their everyday work because it decides on the amount of funding and general support historical objects receive. As a consequence, tourism as a way of making history usable and thus valuable for people should not be condemned but seen as an opportunity. Clever and sustainable management can ensure a balance between mass tourism and complete isolation and even if usage is completely unfeasible in some cases because of concerns about the threat to the material, then there can still be a fruitful interchange between the two sectors. While the tourism sector can learn from heritage experts to consider the effects of overuse, the sector of heritage management can learn to be more open towards new techniques of story-telling and presentation. ■



> THE MUIDERSLOT. PHOTO BY PETER VAN DER WIELEN



# COLUMN

## EERDE EN HET BELEG

> **door Rob Gruben**

*Rob Gruben is eigenaar van BAAC bv*



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